DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 378 861 HE 028 008

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TITLE A Survey of Facilities Associations.
PUB DATE 3 Jun 93
NOTE 13p.; Paper presented at the Facilities Planning Conference (Athens, GA, June 3, 1993).
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Deans; *Administrator Attitudes; College Presidents; *Educational Facilities; Higher Education; *Professional Associations; Professional Recognition; Questionnaires; Recognition (Achievement); *Reputation; *Surveys
IDENTIFIERS *Association of Higher Educ Facilities Officers; Association Role; Association Strength; Chief Financial Officers; National Assn College University Business Officers

ABSTRACT

As part of a critical history of the Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers (APPA), a survey of higher education executives was conducted to ascertain the association's reputation. The questionnaire was sent to the presidents, chief academic officers, and chief financial officers of 102 Southern Association member institutions of higher education. Over 40 percent of institutions responded. While primarily concerned with the association's reputation among institutional executives, questions were asked concerning other associations concerned with institutional facilities. The questionnaire asked about respondents' impressions concerning nine types of higher education associations, recognition of acronyms of 10 groups, respondents' perceptions of the contributions that various associations make, and respondents' specific perceptions regarding APPA's performance in areas considered to be important to the academy and to the individual. Results found that, among the 10 facilities-related groups, only the National Association of College and University Business Officers was widely respected by respondents. A conclusion offers reflections on the difficulties and benefits of association evolution and development. An appendix contains a copy of the questionnaire and tables of results. (Contains 18 references.) (JB)

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ED 378 861

A SURVEY OF FACILITIES ASSOCIATIONS

PRESENTED AT THE 1993

FACILITIES PLANNING CONFERENCE

AT

THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

ATHENS, GEORGIA

JUNE 3, 1993

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PE 028 068

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INTRODUCTION

An association is a unique organization form, usually developed by individuals or groups to promote common interests and attain common goals. In the United States, thousands of associations have been formed for every imaginable reason; by recent count there are several hundred listed in higher education alone.[1]

Hugh Hawkins, a noted historian of higher education, recently published Banding Together,[2] a history of the half-dozen or so significant associations in the academy which rose to prominence in the United States in the first half of the twentieth century. He reminds us that, in spite of the widely recognized desire of each institution of higher education to be unique and autonomous, colleges and universities relinquished part of this institutional mystique to join and gain the benefits of united action. While engaging in lobbying activities may at first have been considered *infra dig* by many, such activities are now expected in our society, and any pejorative connotations regarding these have long since disappeared.

Only a few higher education associations have been formed to promote the interests of those concerned with institutional facilities. Some organizations like NACUBO,[3] SCUP,[4] AIR,[5] and ACUHO[6] address facility-related problems as part of their overall mission; however, these do not limit their efforts or influence to facilities topics. APPA[7] and AUA[8] are two associations which concentrate on higher education facilities exclusively, albeit from different perspectives.

Not to be outdone, associations have their own associations, and association managers and executives also have an association. The latter, ASAE,[9] publishes handbooks and related literature concerning the effective operation of associations, including trade, professional and educations groups. ASAE also recognizes those individuals who have demonstrated their professional abilities and gained appropriate experience; those are certified as an association executive (CAE).

THE SURVEY

In early 1993, a questionnaire was sent to the President, Chief Academic Officer, and Chief Financial Officer of one hundred and two Southern Association (SAC) higher education institutions. The response rate was excellent; over forty percent of the institutions responded in each category.

The questionnaire was developed to collect data for part of this writer's doctoral dissertation, which is a critical history of APPA from 1914 to 1990. While primarily concerned with APPA's reputation among institutional executives, questions were asked concerning NACUBO, SCUP, AIR, and ACUHO for comparative purposes. The questionnaire was presented in four parts, with each part containing ten statements. Answers were scaled in the same direction, with positive responses scoring higher and negative ones lower. The first part involved respondents' impressions concerning nine types of higher education associations, including "non-academic administrative and staff". The second part dealt with recognition of the acronyms of ten groups. CUPA,[10] AAUP,[11] AGB,[12] ACE,[13] and AASCU[14] were included to allow each respondent to recognize familiar groups in the academy. In part three, all groups from part two were graded according to the contributions

that each was perceived making by the presidents, chief academic and chief fiscal officers. Finally, part four dealt specifically with APPA's performance in areas considered to be important to the academy and to the individual; in addition, each was asked if his or her institution was a member of APPA.

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

From recognition and perceived accomplishment perspectives, only NACUBO, among the facilities-related associations, impressed the three executive types. The other groups, including AIR, SCUP, ACUHO, and APPA, fared less well. Comparisons and results are included in the Appendix, along with a copy of the questionnaire.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on this survey alone, facilities-related groups appear to be firmly ensconced in the zone of indifference of most higher education executives. However, it must be reported that, according to one CAE interviewed during the preparation of the questionnaire, members of other higher education associations do recognize the value of groups like APPA; their perceptions at the association executive level are probably more important than those of individual institutional leaders.

During the research phase of this writer's doctoral dissertation, it became apparent that a well run association requires more than the sum of the contribution of its volunteer members. The experience that APPA had when it hired a permanent staff and full-time executive director indicates that it is difficult but necessary to move from the informal to the formal association model if the group is to have an impact on the academy. Non-intuitive

processes, developed and refined through professional association practices, are necessary to begin to attain excellence as a serious higher education facilities group. Facilities practitioners should not feel threatened by, or uncomfortable with, "outsiders" doing their association's work. Recall that historians remind us that in the 19th century, the tired old clergyman/president hired a business manager to take care of the business of running his tiny college.[15]

If a group intends to maximize its impact on the academy, it should consider taking the formal association approach and join the One Dupont Circle clique.[16] A serious but informal group may successfully promote better understanding and cooperative learning among its membership. However, such an organization may find itself mired in an introspective "preaching to the choir" mode.[17] Based on the experience in the cutback management decade of the 1980s, adopting a proactive stance with respect to external influences that affect higher education may be the only way to survive in the cruel world of reality in the 1990s. Opting for a formal association model would appear to be an appropriate gesture for any group seriously seeking success in the academy.[18]

ENDNOTES

1. There were 295 higher education associations listed in 1988. Higher Education Directory. Washington, D.C.: Peterson, 1988.

2. Hawkins, Hugh, Banding Together. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.

3. National Association of College and University Business Officers.

4. Society for College and University Planning.

5. Association for Institutional Researchers.

6. Association of College and University Housing Officers - International.

7. APPA: The Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers.

8. Association of University Architects.

9. American Society of Association Executives.

10. College and University Personnel Association.

11. American Association of University Professors.

12. Association of Governing Boards.

13. American Council on Education.

14. American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

15. Tucker, Allan. Chairing the Academic Department. New York: American Council on Education, 1981.

16. The clique includes members of the Washington-based Higher Education Secretariat, comprised of forty-one higher education associations; this group is led by the "Big Six" presidential associations, and its work is coordinated by the American Council on Education. In addition, CHEMA, the Council of Higher Education Management Associations, represents twenty-eight groups, including NACUBO, APPA, ACUHO, CUPA and SCUP.

17. Organizations should perform a self-study every few years to check their vital signs. An excellent resource for this exercise is Assess Your Strengths and Weaknesses. Washington, D.C.: A.S.A.E., 1988.

18. A measure of APPA's success as a formal association is evidenced in the results of a recent membership survey. Over ninety percent of the respondents expressed satisfaction with the group, and indicated that they received value from their membership; the principal values received were access to specialized knowledge in higher education facilities management, and the opportunity to network with fellow professionals. From Facilities Manager, Spring 1993 edition.

APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE - ASSOCIATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Name of Institution - _____ Date - _____
Name/Position of Respondent - _____

Part I - General

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about higher education associations? Please circle one number for each, where:

1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree, with Reservations
3 = Agree, with Reservations 4 = Strongly Agree

1.	All higher education associations with which I am familiar are helpful to the academy.	1	2	3	4
2.	Associations based on a single academic discipline are helpful to the academy.	1	2	3	4
3.	Associations based on presidential membership are helpful to the academy.	1	2	3	4
4.	Associations based on professional schools are helpful to the academy.	1	2	3	4
5.	Associations based on auxiliary enterprises are helpful to the academy.	1	2	3	4
6.	Associations based on non-academic administrative and staff functions are helpful to the academy.	1	2	3	4
7.	Associations based on academic administrative functions are helpful to the academy.	1	2	3	4
8.	Associations based on institutional type are helpful to the academy.	1	2	3	4
9.	Associations based on regional/geographic considerations are helpful to the academy.	1	2	3	4
10.	Associations based on religious affiliations are helpful to the academy.	1	2	3	4

Part II - Association Recognition

The acronyms listed below represent certain associations which are active in higher education today. Please circle one number for each, indicating your personal knowledge of each group, where:
1 = None 2 = Limited 3 = Some 4 = Extensive

11.	NACUBO	1	2	3	4
12.	AAUP	1	2	3	4
13.	ACUHO-I	1	2	3	4
14.	AIR	1	2	3	4
15.	SCUP	1	2	3	4
16.	AGB	1	2	3	4
17.	APPA	1	2	3	4
18.	ACE	1	2	3	4
19.	CUPA	1	2	3	4
20.	AASCU	1	2	3	4

(SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE)

APPENDIX

Part III - Association Accomplishments

For the same group of associations, rate each according to the contributions you feel each has made to the field of higher education. Please circle one number for each, where:

0 = Don't Know 1 = None 2 = Little 3 = Some 4 = Significant

21.	NACUBO	0	1	2	3	4
22.	AAUP	0	1	2	3	4
23.	ACUHO-I	0	1	2	3	4
24.	AIR	0	1	2	3	4
25.	SCUP	0	1	2	3	4
26.	AGB	0	1	2	3	4
27.	APPA	0	1	2	3	4
28.	ACE	0	1	2	3	4
29.	CUPA	0	1	2	3	4
30.	AASCU	0	1	2	3	4

Part IV - A Higher Education Facilities Association

One of these associations - APPA - represents those who administer the physical facilities, including buildings, grounds and infrastructure, of higher education institutions. Please circle one number for each statement, indicating the extent of your agreement with the following, where:

0 = Don't Know 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree, With Reservations
3 = Agree, with Reservations 4 = Strongly Agree

31.	APPA has been the academy's principal resource regarding facility problems.	0	1	2	3	4
32.	APPA has furnished helpful data to assist in budgeting for facilities.	0	1	2	3	4
33.	APPA has promoted programs to assist in coping with Federal and State regulatory problems.	0	1	2	3	4
34.	APPA has promoted programs to assist in re-trenchment management strategies.	0	1	2	3	4
35.	APPA has promoted programs to improve management and professional skills of facilities personnel.	0	1	2	3	4
36.	APPA has promoted planning as a method for coping with change.	0	1	2	3	4
37.	APPA has furnished a significant body of literature to assist the academy.	0	1	2	3	4
38.	APPA has been the major force in exposing the deferred maintenance/capital renewal dilemma.	0	1	2	3	4
39.	APPA has promoted cooperation among higher education associations regarding mutual problems.	0	1	2	3	4
40.	APPA has furnished information which has helped me in my present position.	0	1	2	3	4

		Yes	No	Don't Know
41.	Finally, is your institution a member of APPA?	___	___	

****** THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP ******

John M. Casey, P.E., Manager, Engineering Department
Physical Plant Division, University of Georgia

(SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE)

APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE - ASSOCIATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

RESULTS BY RESPONDENT CATEGORIES

Part I - General*

(A - PRESIDENTS B - ACADEMIC C - FINANCIAL)

		CATEGORIES A	B	C
1.	All higher education associations with which I am familiar are helpful to the academy.	2.51	2.57	2.57
2.	Associations based on a single academic discipline are helpful to the academy.	2.90	2.90	2.94
3.	Associations based on presidential membership are helpful to the academy.	3.08	2.93	3.06
4.	Associations based on professional schools are helpful to the academy.	2.91	2.81	2.98
5.	Associations based on auxiliary enterprises are helpful to the academy.	2.81	2.71	3.21
6.	Associations based on non-academic administrative and staff functions are helpful to the academy.	2.91	2.67	3.13
7.	Associations based on academic administrative functions are helpful to the academy.	2.99	3.05	2.96
8.	Associations based on institutional type are helpful to the academy.	3.22	3.05	3.11
9.	Associations based on regional/geographic considerations are helpful to the academy.	2.84	2.98	2.87
10.	Associations based on religious affiliations are helpful to the academy.	2.81	2.48	2.25

Part II - Association Recognition*

		CATEGORIES A PRESIDENTS	B ACADEMIC	C FINANCIAL
11.	NACUBO	3.32	2.76	3.88
12.	AAUP	3.36	3.44	2.64
13.	ACUHO-I	1.48	1.28	1.48
14.	AIR	1.76	1.80	1.80
15.	SCUP	2.00	1.84	2.20
16.	AGB	3.12	2.16	2.20
17.	APPA	1.60	1.44	2.92
18.	ACE	3.44	3.44	2.96
19.	CUPA	2.60	2.44	3.28
20.	AASCU	2.96	2.64	2.20

* MEAN SCALE SCORES

APPENDIX

Part III - Association Accomplishments**

		CATEGORIES		
		A PRESIDENTS	B ACADEMIC	C FINANCIAL
21.	NACUBO	3.73	3.31	3.77
22.	AAUP	3.04	3.19	2.69
23.	ACUHO-I	2.88	2.40	2.29
24.	AIR	2.80	2.80	2.43
25.	SCUP	2.81	2.67	2.54
26.	AGB	3.22	3.68	3.04
27.	APPA	2.93	2.52	3.16
28.	ACE	3.43	3.39	3.10
29.	CUPA	2.99	2.91	3.28
30.	AASCU	3.35	3.36	2.75

Part IV - A Higher Education Facilities Association**

(A - PRESIDENTS B - ACADEMIC C - FINANCIAL)

		CATEGORIES		
		A	B	C
31.	APPA has been the academy's principal resource regarding facility problems.	2.38	2.67	2.93
32.	APPA has furnished helpful data to assist in budgeting for facilities.	2.88	2.64	2.93
33.	APPA has promoted programs to assist in coping with Federal and State regulatory problems.	2.82	3.09	3.25
34.	APPA has promoted programs to assist in retrenchment management strategies.	2.53	2.44	2.66
35.	APPA has promoted programs to improve management and professional skills of facilities personnel.	3.06	3.22	3.43
36.	APPA has promoted planning as a method for coping with change.	3.00	3.00	3.06
37.	APPA has furnished a significant body of literature to assist the academy.	2.54	2.45	3.33
38.	APPA has been the major force in exposing the deferred maintenance/capital renewal dilemma.	3.00	2.60	3.18
39.	APPA has promoted cooperation among higher education associations regarding mutual problems.	2.73	2.77	3.20
40.	APPA has furnished information which has helped me in my present position.	2.28	1.75	2.90

			Yes	No	Don't Know
41.	Finally, is your institution a member of APPA?	A	8	8	28
		B	8	4	30
		C	37	4	6

**MEAN SCALE SCORES EXCLUDING "DON'T KNOW" RESPONSES

APPENDIX

Part III - Association Accomplishments*

		CATEGORIES A PRESIDENTS	B ACADEMIC	C FINANCIAL
21.	NACUBO	3.56	2.84	3.77
22.	AAUP	2.84	3.12	3.00
23.	ACUHO-I	0.72	0.40	0.83
24.	AIR	1.08	1.20	1.19
25.	SCUP	1.28	1.08	1.62
26.	AGB	2.64	1.84	1.81
27.	APPA	1.00	0.72	2.62
28.	ACE	3.12	3.16	2.77
29.	CUPA	2.04	2.08	3.00
30.	AASCU	2.44	2.08	1.64

Part IV - A Higher Education Facilities Association*

(A - PRESIDENTS B - ACADEMIC C - FINANCIAL)

		CATEGORIES A	B	C
31.	APPA has been the academy's principal resource regarding facility problems.	0.89	0.76	2.49
32.	APPA has furnished helpful data to assist in budgeting for facilities.	1.14	0.69	2.49
33.	APPA has promoted programs to assist in coping with Federal and State regulatory problems.	1.11	0.81	2.49
34.	APPA has promoted programs to assist in retrenchment management strategies.	0.88	0.52	1.87
35.	APPA has promoted programs to improve management and professional skills of facilities personnel.	1.14	0.69	2.85
36.	APPA has promoted planning as a method for coping with change.	0.91	0.64	2.28
37.	APPA has furnished a significant body of literature to assist the academy.	0.77.	0.64	2.76
38.	APPA has been the major force in exposing the deferred maintenance/capital renewal dilemma.	1.12	0.62	2.71
39.	APPA has promoted cooperation among higher education associations regarding mutual problems.	0.95	0.59	2.38
40.	APPA has furnished information which has helped me in my present position.	0.95	0.67	2.55

*MEAN SCALE SCORES INCLUDE ZERO VALUES FOR "DON'T KNOW" RESPONSES.